

Sussex F.A. 0, Berks and Bucks F.A. 1

WEEKEND tonsilitis sufferer Geoff Anthony was at the centre of confusion before Tuesday night's vital Southern Counties Amateur Championship quarter final. The Wycombe winger had previously been withdrawn from the Berks and Bucks squad, but turned up fully fit at Loakes Park, where the side assembled in the afternoon.

In the meantime Wokingham Town's Mike Nicks responded to an S.O.S. call by rushing to Horsham as replacement for Anthony. After hearing of the mix-up however, he sportingly agreed to stand down so that the Welshman could play.

With everything settled team-wise, the Allied Counties, including seven Wanderers, took the field several minutes late, following a long, arduous journey into Sussex.

MORE PROBLEMS

And there too they met problems before an 80th minute goal cleared their way through to the last four stage of the competition.

For a hard, robust Sussex team proved themselves a far sterner opposition than had been anticipated on the bumpy Horsham pitch. With wingers Steer and Sweet as their dangerous men, they claimed a larger percentage of first half play than the visitors, who took quite some time to settle.

Sussex never really looked threatening though, and the second half saw a substantial change in pattern as the Allied Counties' greater talent began to tell.

Indeed the latter 45 minutes became the kind of end-to-end combat which inevitably means missed chances at both ends.

Soon after the interval, the visitors lost Chesham United full back Steve Bates with a fractured nose. His replacement, substitute Pitts took over in a midfield role, while Iain MacLean dropped back to partner the snappy Gary Titterton.

ALMOST TROUBLE

For a fleeting spell the Allied Counties looked in trouble, when two breakaways almost gave Sussex the lead.

But the danger past, and Anthony made his eventual inclusion well worthwhile by laying the foundations of the visitors' decisive score after 80 minutes. Swiftly carrying play up the touchline, he drew goalkeeper Swaysland off his line, before centring for Brian Wozley to shoot on the half-volley from a position inside the 'box'.

The goal capped Wozley's impressive debut for the Allied Counties. The former Hendon and Wembley striker, now at Maidenhead, was used as part of a double spearhead alongside York Road colleague Mick Chatterton.

Chatterton tried hard without ever being given a clear cut chance, while, when Sussex were pressing, Wozley tended to retreat in support of midfield men Larry Pritchard and MacLean.

Wycombe skipper John De Laney sustained a cut over an eye about 15 minutes from time, but, with Ted Powell, kept Sussex raids at bay throughout.

Berks and Bucks will play the semi-final on home territory and, if still involved, can also claim the benefit of home advantage in the final.

SUSSEX: P. Swaysland; A. Tasker, D. Pearson (Eastbourne Utd.), A. Lower, J. West (Horsham), R. Smith, B. Titterton, G. Wozley, P. McDowall, M. Morgan (Southwick), C. Newstead, G. Sweet. All players from Lewes F.C., unless otherwise stated.

BERKS AND BUCKS: J. Maskell; G. Titterton (Wokingham), S. Bates (Chesham), E. Powell, J. Delaney, I. MacLean, G. Anthony, L. Pritchard, M. Chatterton (Maidenhead), B. Wozley (Maidenhead), J. Hutchinson, G. Hobbs, B. Pitts (Maidenhead) for Bates 50 mins.

Referee: J. Cooke (Surrey).

Half-time: 0-0. Goalscorer: Berks and Bucks—Wozley (80).

AMATEUR CUP

Wycombe shocked

By LANCE MASTERS

Wycombe 0, Skelmersdale 3

SKELMERSDALE UNITED, planning to turn professional at the end of the season, are through to the F.A. Amateur Cup semi-finals for the third consecutive year after beating Wycombe Wanderers, the Cup favourites at Loakes Park.

It may be a tragedy that Wycombe, the best supported amateur club in the country, are

out of the Cup, but this takes nothing from the triumph of the Cheshire League champions in a match they seemed sure to lose for nearly an hour.

Skelmersdale, who now meet Leatherhead at Bolton next Saturday in the last hurdle before Wembley, did well to survive the rigours of Wycombe's onslaught in the first half. They were plunged deep in defence and it required superb goal-keeping by Frankish to keep their hopes alive.

From the opening minutes, when Allan and Bennett together bundled a lob from Fusillo off the goal line, Skelmersdale were probed and pressured by a swift-moving Wycombe attack.

But clear scoring chances rarely came, so alert and industrious was the Merseysiders' defence. Soon after half time Hutchinson had the ball swept off his toes, and that was almost the last chance that was to offer itself to a Wycombe side who rapidly lost control in mid-field.

The first sign of an upset came after 52 minutes, when Wolfe's corner kick from the right found Dickin unmarked by the far post and he headed an easy goal. Twenty minutes later, after a lob by McDermott had struck the Wycombe crossbar, Dickin was put through by Clements to make it 2-0.

Wycombe's early supremacy was a fading memory and their desperate attempts to get back into the game repeatedly left them stretched and vulnerable at the back.

Skelmersdale, beaten finalists in 1967, matched Wycombe's frenzy with growing finesse and it was no surprise when Wolfe added a third goal in the last minute.